

Department of Justice

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MAN SENTENCED TO 135 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- Joseph Norman Hart, 48, of Ontario, NY, was sentenced to 135 months in prison, to be followed by 20 years of supervised release by U.S. District Judge Charles J. Siragusa, United States Attorney Kathleen M. Mehlretter announced. Hart pled guilty in October to a felony information charging him with two counts of Possession of Child Pornography. He was also ordered to pay a \$1,500 fine, a \$200 special assessment, and was ordered to register as a sex offender.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Craig R. Gestring, who handled the case, stated that on or before March 25, 2008, the defendant possessed over 600 images of child pornography which he admitted to downloading from the internet. He was arrested by Monroe County Sheriff's Deputies and Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The plea was the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Lev Kubiak, and Deputies from the Monroe County Sheriff's Office under the direction of Sheriff Patrick O'Flynn.